



Find the Clues: A Lesson Plan for Middle School Food Detectives

(adapted from www.agclassroom.org/teacher/pdf/prairie/9_12/4_FoodDetective.pdf)

Overview

Students will explore food and nutrition and answer specific questions about prepared food products.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify specific ingredients of prepared food products and explain where and how these foods are grown.
- Identify additives on the ingredients list and explain their purpose in the product.

Materials:

1. A collection of food labels and/or have students bring some to class.
2. Access to the library, research books, and/or the Internet.
3. Food Label Information Sheet (included in this mailing)

Method:

1. Break the class into small groups of 2-3.
2. Distribute labels.
3. Have the students make a list of each ingredient from the ingredient list on their food label.
4. After each ingredient, have the students list what the ingredient comes from and how it is grown or produced. They can use the library or internet to find information on where and how the food or ingredient was grown.
5. If some of the ingredients are chemicals, find out what their purpose is. Examples would be: preservatives, flavorings, anticaking agents, etc. Research and explain how these chemicals might impact the consumer's health. (Emphasize some additives can be beneficial, such as vitamins.) Have students examine their research to find a possible blending of fact and opinion.
6. After their research is finished, and they have found all the clues, share the information with classmates and families.

Maine Learning Results Links: (Grades 6-8)

Health Concepts, B2: *Identify resources from home, school, and community that provide valid health information and services.*

Science and Technology, K4: *Analyze means of slanting information.*

